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Young, James.

56TH YEAR

THE

GORE

Fire Insurance

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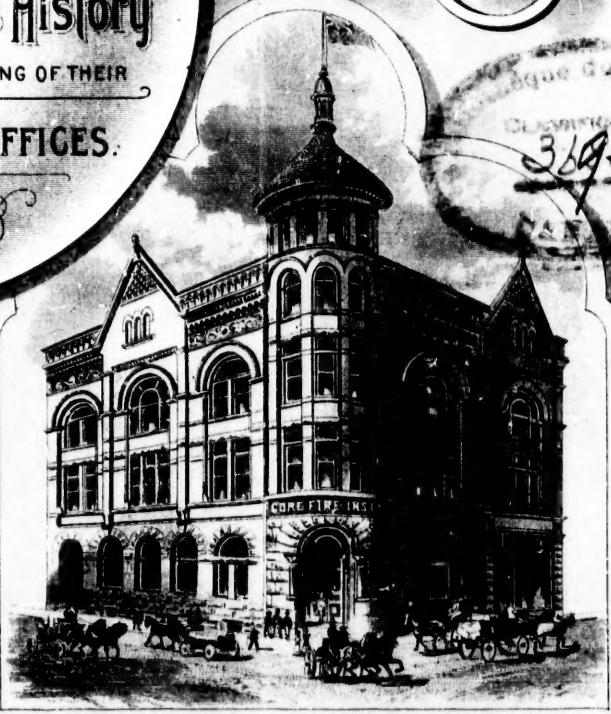
SOUVENIR

OF THE

Company's History

AND THE OPENING OF THEIR

NEW OFFICES.



TORONTO LITHOGRAPHING CO.

HEAD OFFICE, GALT, ONTARIO.

1895

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HISTORY OF THE GORE FIRE INSURANCE CO.

FROM 1839 TO 1895.

BEING AN ADDRESS DELIVERED
BY THE

HON. JAMES YOUNG,

PRESIDENT OF THE COMPANY,

*In Moving the Adoption of the Report at the 56th ANNUAL
MEETING of the Company, held in their NEW HEAD
OFFICE, corner Main and Ainslie Streets, Galt,
on the 28th January, 1895.*

[PUBLISHED IN ACCORDANCE WITH RESOLUTION PASSED
AT THE ANNUAL MEETING.]

GALT, ONT :
Jaffray Bros., Book and Job Printers.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

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HON. JAMES YOUNG, PRESIDENT, - - - GALT.

ADAM WARNOCK, ESQ., VICE-PRESIDENT, - GALT.

HUGH McCULLOCH, ESQ., - - - - - GALT.

HUGH CANT, ESQ., - - - - - GALT.

ROBERT SCOTT, ESQ., - - - - - GALT.

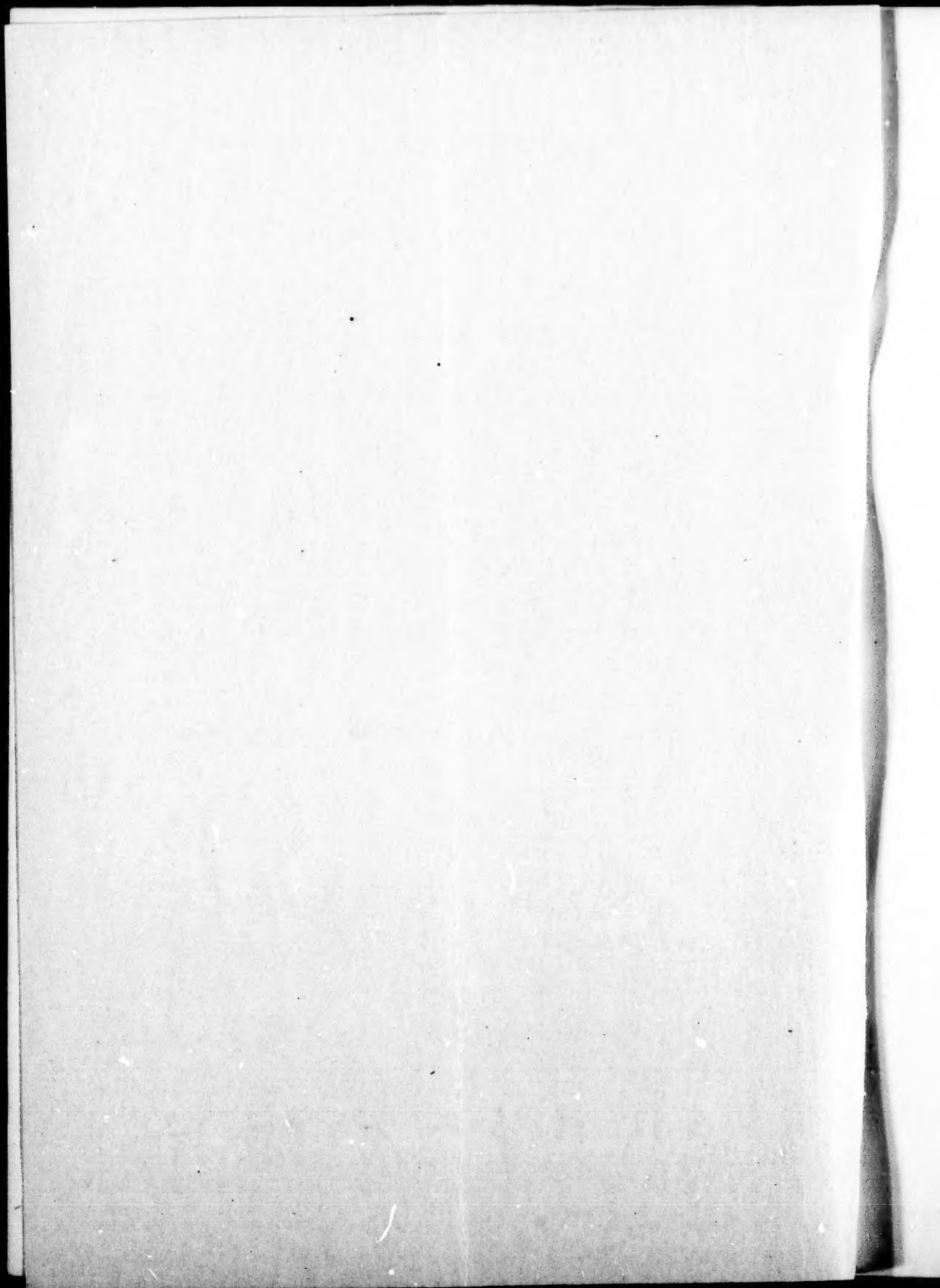
CHARLES MAGILL, ESQ., - - - - HAMILTON.

JOHN WATSON, ESQ., - - - - - AYR.

JAMES GOLDIE, ESQ., - - - - - GUELPH.

R. S. STRONG, ESQ., MANAGING DIRECTOR, GALT.





The History of the "Gore."

1839 TO 1895.

THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN :—

We are met together to-day, for the first time, in the new and handsome Head Office of the Company, which has never before possessed a building of its own, although now one of the oldest and most successful institutions of its kind in Ontario.

The history of the Gore Fire Insurance Company is so closely interwoven with the progress and development of our Province, and associated with it at different periods were so many of its prominent business men—now, alas! nearly all gone over to the "silent majority"—whose vigorous bodies and active brains helped so much to make Central Ontario the Garden of America which it is to-day, it has been deemed fitting that, on an occasion so memorable in the Company's history, I should make a few observations on its formation, and long and useful career.

With this object in view, I have carefully looked over the minutes of each meeting of the different Boards of Directors since 1839—a period of fifty-six years—the subjects discussed, at least those of early days, being all dead issues now, but of pressing and vital importance then.

In making this review, nothing is more striking than the evidence afforded of the great progress made by our Province in population and wealth, and in the comforts and circumstances of the people. In 1839, however, it was still

LITTLE BETTER THAN A WILDERNESS.

There was little business other than farming, and very few of the newspapers, banks, insurance and kindred institutions still exist which were in operation when the "Gore" began its career. Whether it is a case of "the survival of the fittest" or not, it at least must be admitted that this Company has survived nearly all its early contemporaries, and it is not too much to say, that at no period during its life of fifty-six years did it enjoy anything like so large and successful a business as it does to-day.

The first steps to form the Company were taken in the then little town, but now the ambitious City of Hamilton. The notice of meeting requested "The freeholders of the Gore District to meet at Plumer Burley's hotel, in the Town of Hamilton, on the 13th of

April, 1837, to form a Mutual Fire Insurance Company under the provisions of the Act of William IV., passed on the 20th April, 1836." The notice was signed by ten freeholders—Messrs. John W. Downs, Francis G. Stanton, Hugh B. Willson, Samuel Mills, Alex. Carpenter, Edward Jackson, James L. Wilson, Plumer Burley, Geo. S. Tiffany and Michael Aikman. These gentlemen have all passed away, some of them long years ago, but they were among the most enterprising and successful citizens of Hamilton and the Gore District at the time under consideration.

The meeting thus convened was entirely successful. The freeholders assembled in goodly numbers, and were enthusiastic for the establishment of the new Company, the want of which was universally felt. Michael Aikman, Esq., was elected chairman, and Francis G. Stanton, Esq., Secretary, and it was decided that the names should be taken forthwith, of all those present who were willing to become first insurers. The list of names is duly recorded in the minutes, and is sufficiently large and influential to indicate that the meeting must have separated in perfect confidence that "The Gore District Mutual Fire Insurance Company, Hamilton," would soon be in operation.

As a matter of fact, however, not another public step was taken to carry out the project for over two years thereafter! This at first sight may seem inexplicable, but the explanation is simple when we remember that during this year

AN UNEXPECTED AND EXTRAORDINARY EVENT

occurred in Canadian history—the Mackenzie rebellion. During the summer of 1837 the Province was in a constant whirl of political excitement, and the following December occurred the famous march on Toronto and the so-called battle of Gallow's Hill. The "Men of Gore," which included a Company from Galt and Dumfries, were promptly called out under Sir Allan McNab, and marched to the Niagara frontier to invest Navy Island, on which the rebels had taken refuge. Amidst the disorder and excitement the proposed Insurance Company seems to have been completely forgotten.

Another curious circumstance in connection with the Company's inception is this, that when the project was revived, it was in Brantford and not in Hamilton. I fancy "thereby hangs a tale," but avoiding idle speculations and following the official records, the first meeting of the Gore District Mutual Fire Insurance Company was announced to be held in the School House,

IN THE TOWN OF BRANTFORD, ON THE 18TH JUNE, 1839.

The meeting was well attended and the following gentlemen were elected the first Board of Directors :—Messrs. William Richardson, Richard Wilkins, Henry Moyle, John A. Wilkes, Allan Good, Arunah Huntington, and Abraham Cook. These gentlemen elected

Mr. John A. Wilkes, President, and Mr. Wm. A. Walker, Secretary.

The Company was soon ready for business, and on the 10th July instructed the Secretary to publish a report of their proceedings in the *Hamilton Journal and Express*, the *Toronto Patriot* and the *Examiner*, all of which journals have long since disappeared.

This document is somewhat of a curiosity, judged by the business methods of to-day, and begins by throwing some light on the somewhat mysterious change from Hamilton to Brantford. It explains that nothing further having been done by the promoters at Hamilton after obtaining the names of certain gentlemen as proposed insurers, a Brantford gentleman (name not given) procured the list thereof and secured sufficient additional Brantford names to start the Company; that all preliminaries required by the Provincial Insurance Act had been complied with; and that the Company was now in operation and ready for business. Mr. Walker, the Secretary, whose name is appended, was evidently determined that the "Gore" should have its full share of the insurance business of the district, for he closes with the following stirring appeal:—

"Having gone through all the necessary preliminary stages required by the said Act of Incorporation, the Directors are now prepared to receive applications for insurance, and feel confident that the inhabitants of the "Gore" district will show to the Province that in no other district is the principle of saving money better understood than in this, and let our motto be: "*Men of Gore! be united, keep your money at home and help one another!*" (Laughter.)

But all was not smooth sailing yet. The August meeting of the Directors appears to have been

THROWN INTO QUITE A FLUTTER

on learning that the Hamilton people had called another meeting for the 9th instant, to form a Company. Thus loomed up what might become a dangerous rival, and the Secretary was authorized to attend the meeting at Hamilton and make explanations.

It looks a little at this time of day as if the Brantfordians had been smart enough to run off with the Hamilton plum. But "all's well that ends well," and their action was doubtless legitimate enough, inasmuch as the Hamilton meeting, over which the Hon. Adam Ferguson presided, and Mr. Geo. S. Tiffany acted as Secretary, came to this sensible decision: "That as it appeared that a Mutual Fire Insurance Company had already been started in the Gore District, the Board of Directors be requested to open Agency Offices in the principal towns of the district as soon as possible."

Thus was the Gore District Mutual Fire Insurance Company, now generally known as the "old Gore," started on its career. For several years Mr. Walker seems to have comprised the whole office staff, and the numerous and efficient insurance employees of the Province may be interested in knowing that his first salary as Secretary and Treasurer was \$300, and that when he was appointed Travelling Agent, the Directors, in a rather reckless spirit of liber-

ality, decided that "the policy and survey fees should be considered the remuneration for his services!"

It was not until 1846 that Mr. Thomas Rich, of Galt, so long afterwards connected with the Company, was appointed Travelling Agent, and the following circumstances connected therewith are worth noting, as showing the substantial business methods of those pioneer days. Before Mr. Rich entered upon his duties he had to furnish bonds himself in £1000, and two sureties of £1000 each, and he had to subscribe to a formidable list of instructions, one of which was that in no case was he to insure more than £2000 in one risk! He was also to balance his books with the Treasurer once a month, and if any neglect occurred in this, it was stated in blunt Anglo-Saxon "that you must expect the action of the Board speedily to follow such neglect." Some of the instructions appear rather antiquated now, but were mostly wise and good.

From its inception the "Gore" made steady progress for those early times, especially in what are now the counties of Wentworth, Brant and Waterloo, and their chief towns,

HAMILTON, BRANTFORD AND GALT.

It evidently supplied a long felt want. Five years after starting, the Directors reported the total amount at risk to be £265,260, the annual receipts £2162, and the losses £1788. The success of the Company was considered to be assured, and a seat on the Board of Directors began to be esteemed quite an honor.

This and other reasons led to a very brisk contest for seats on the Board at the annual meeting held on the 13th June, 1844. There was a large assemblage of the members of the Company from far and near, and a lively time in the then little town of Brantford when the voting was going on. As throwing light upon the men and the times, I append the names of and votes recorded for the Directors on this occasion:—

Mr. Edward Jackson, Hamilton	612
" Allan Good, Brantford ..	493
" Daniel Totten, Paris	377
" Charles Watt, Brantford	364
" James Coleman, Dundas	364
" Abraham Cook, Mount Pleasant	363
" John A. Wilkes, Brantford	359
" James Keith, Brantford	354
" Andrew Elliott, Galt	354
" George Douglass	352
" James K. Andrews, Galt	330
" William Walker, Brantford	330

Mr. Andrews and Mr. Walker being a tie, a second ballot elected the former, and the official record informs us, without throwing any light upon the cause, that at the first meeting of the new Board, Mr. John A. Wilkes, who had been President since

1839, resigned his Directorship, and that Mr. Abraham Cook was thereupon unanimously elected President in his place. Three years afterwards, in 1847, Mr. Walker was replaced as Secretary by Mr. Allan Good, and the Company continued to be thus officered (the year 1862 excepted) with Mr. Cook as President, Mr. Good as Secretary, and Mr. Rich, Travelling Agent, until the removal of the Head Office from Brantford in 1863, a period of sixteen years.

For many years after this the business of the Company continued to advance, and its popularity for a considerable period is attested by the number of influential business men in the towns and villages of Western Ontario who were at various times either Directors or members and insurers.

Among gentlemen not already mentioned, who in early days acted for longer or shorter periods on the Board of Directors, were the following :

GALT—Absalom Shade and John Fleming.
 HAMILTON—Judge O'Reilly and the Hon. Samuel Mills.
 PARIS—Norman Hamilton and Hiram Capron.
 BRANTFORD—James Wilkes, Andrew Higinbotham, John W. Downs and Alex. Bunnell.
 FLAMBORO—George Corbett.
 SIMCOE—Nathan C. Ford.
 DUNDAS—John Quarrie.
 HAMILTON—William Turnbull.

The prominent business patrons of the Company throughout the Province,

ABOUT HALF A CENTURY AGO,

were numerous. Among them are to be found such well remembered names—honored landmarks in their several localities—as the following :

DUNDAS—Robert Holt, John Gartshore, Robert Spence, Bernard Collins, J. B. Ewart, Thomas H. McKenzie.
 PARIS—Hugh Finlayson, Robert McCosh, John Irving.
 HAMILTON—Samuel B. Freeman; Buchanan, Harris & Co.; Dennis Moore, Daniel Dewey, C. & A. Magill, James Osborne, Ebenezer Stimson, A. & T. C. Kerr.
 LONDON—Bishop Cronyn, H. C. R. Beecher.
 BRANTFORD—I. & T. Cockshutt, George Babcock, Dr. Alfred Digby.
 WOODHILL—Hon. Adam Ferguson
 FLAMBORO—Dr. James Hamilton, Andrew T. Kirby, William Miller.
 STRATFORD—John C. Daly, Thos. M. Daly.
 HALDIMAND—David Thompson.
 OAKVILLE—Smith & Chisholm.
 WOODSTOCK—John Douglass, H. Finkle.
 CALEDONIA—Ronald McKinnon.
 ANCASTER—James Walker.

The "Gore" was popular in Galt from its commencement, and after Mr. Rich's appointment, who resided in the village, most of our earlier business men insured in it. Among the first to take out

policies in the Company were the following gentlemen, whose names will recall to our older citizens many pleasing and sad recollections:

T. S. Treadwell, Thos. G. Chapman, George Lee, Thos. Blacklock, Francis McIlroy, Henry McCrum, James Cowan, Oliver P. Knox, John Davidson, Adam Ainslie, Chas. Brown, Alex. Addison, Dr. Robert Miller, James Harris, Walter H. Benn, Duncan Shepherd, Robert Wyllie, John Young, James Fraser, John Barraclough, Robert Wallace and Nathan Coy.

No apology is necessary for recording the names, and thus helping to preserve the memory of these early patrons of the "Gore." I was a lad at school when most of them were in the prime of their vigorous manhood, but I was afterwards privileged to see or know many of them in Hamilton, Brantford and other places, as well as Galt,

AND A GRANDER LOT OF MEN

than they and the other early pioneers of this section of Ontario, physically and intellectually, I have never known and never expect to see. They are, alas ! nearly all silent now, but Ontario would not be the splendid province it is to-day, but for the heroic courage, industry, enterprise and perseverance which they displayed in the days of its early settlement. (Applause.)

It would take too long and lead us too far afield, to follow closely the vicissitudes which attended the Company until the removal to Galt. The annual report of 1859, twenty years after starting business, gives the amount of property at risk at \$2,018,281, and the value of the premium notes held as \$181,947. The receipts for the same year, less discounted paper, were \$17,162, and the payments \$13,324. For several years, however, the Company had sustained very heavy losses, and had gradually drifted into a very unsatisfactory position. It would serve no good purpose to raise the curtain at this late date, now over thirty years since the circumstances took place. Suffice it to say that dark clouds had appeared on the Company's horizon, which threatened its future. These steadily grew more ominous until 1863, when a crisis occurred in its affairs, which ended in the members deciding upon a complete change in the Board of Directors and management.

This occurred at the annual meeting held at Brantford on the 1st June, 1863. For at least the first ten years, Hamilton was the principal centre of the Company's business, Brantford being second, and Galt third. But Galt and neighborhood had gradually attained to the foremost place, and when the difficulties of the Company became aggravated and long continued, a movement was started to solve them by remodelling the Board of Directors and removing the Head Office to Galt. It was completely successful, and the annual meeting of 1863, after a somewhat stormy and excited dis-

cussion, resulted in the election of a new Board, composed of the following gentlemen :

HAMILTON—Milton Davis, R. Meakins.

GALT—John Davidson, James Crombie, Richard S. Strong,

Morris C. Lutz, John Fleming, Richard Blain.

BRANTFORD—Charles Watt, John Comerford.

DUNDAS—James Coleman.

Immediately after the meeting terminated, the Directors met for organization. This was done by electing John Davidson, Esq., of Galt, as President, and Mr. Thomas Rich, the Travelling Agent, as Secretary and Treasurer, *pro tem*. At the next meeting, held in Brantford on the 15th June, a By-Law was passed in accordance with the Consolidated Statutes of Upper Canada, chapter 52, changing the Head Office to Galt, and providing for its removal on the 1st of July ensuing.

The first office occupied in Galt was in the second story of the Commercial Buildings, immediately above the lower flat just vacated, one or other of which was occupied for over thirty-one years. There the new Board, which was strong in business talent and financial strength, went to work with

CHARACTERISTIC ENERGY AND ENTERPRISE

to extricate the Company from its difficulties and restore it to a sound financial basis. The President, Mr. Davidson, and Messrs. Fleming and Strong, may be mentioned as having given especial attention to its affairs, and with the aid of the other Directors promptly introduced sound business methods, which gradually secured a return of the confidence of the insuring public.

Two years later, in 1865, important changes took place in the management. Mr. Rich resigned, having served nineteen years, and Mr. Thomas M. Simons, of Hamilton, was appointed Secretary and Treasurer in his place. Shortly afterwards Mr. Robert McLean, for many years past the respected Secretary of the Toronto Fire Underwriters Association, became Inspector of the "Gore," and in this capacity got his first pointers in the Insurance business. In 1866 the Board for the first time elected a Vice-President in the person of Mr. Strong. But after this the business management underwent very little change till 1877—a period of 11 years—except that in 1869 Mr. Fleming was elected President in place of Mr. Davidson, who requested to be relieved.

During this period many valuable changes were made in the mode of assessment and the conditions and rates of Insurance. The most important of these was the introduction, in 1868, of the Cash System, thus giving those requiring Insurance the choice of either the Cash or the Mutual plans.

The present organization of the Board and staff of the "Gore" may be said to date from 1877, and it seems but as yesterday, so

swiftly does time fly. The changes came about in this way. In the month of May, Mr. McLean resigned to accept a more lucrative position, and the late Mr. James McFeiggan was appointed to the vacant Inspectorship. In August

THE SUDDEN DEATH OF MR. FLEMING,

then M. P. P. for South Waterloo, startled the town and left the Presidency vacant. Mr. Strong was thereupon elected President, and Mr. James Young, Vice-President. Shortly afterwards, Mr. Simons resigned the office of Secretary and Treasurer, when the Directors, after careful consideration, finally reorganized the officers of the Company as follows :

PRESIDENT—Mr. James Young.
VICE-PRESIDENT—Mr. Adam Warnock.
MANAGING DIRECTOR—Mr. R. S. Strong.
INSPECTOR—Mr. James McFeiggan.

Mr. John Mackendrick became Inspector in 1887 on the lamented death of Mr. McFeiggan, but with this exception, the business organization of the "Gore" has continued since 1877—a period of seventeen years—almost without a break and entirely without a jar, to which circumstances, in no small degree, it doubtless owes its present strong and fortunate position.

The striking progress and success which have attended the Company since the time mentioned, is clearly attested by the large increase in the amount of property covered by its policies and in its Cash and Total assets. In 1879 the total amount under risk was \$4,019,780. At the close of 1894 it was \$11,886,801, an increase of nearly 300 per cent. The Cash and Total assets, the latter including the unassessed balance of premium notes, have increased as follows :

Year.	Cash Assets.	Total Assets.
1877.....	\$ 9,877.....	\$ 98,908
1878.....	10,188.....	99,343
1879.....	14,956.....	103,776
1880.....	27,958.....	123,140
1881.....	44,055.....	142,687
1882.....	49,608.....	142,209
1883.....	55,616.....	153,285
1884.....	74,571.....	189,926
1885.....	92,847.....	218,896
1886.....	98,673.....	238,294
1887.....	109,156.....	256,280
1888.....	108,552.....	259,822
1889.....	125,499.....	281,172
1890.....	145,305.....	314,126
1891.....	151,337.....	341,282
1892.....	158,872.....	351,122
1893*.....	165,093.....	357,253
1894*.....	176,495.....	349,938

* Including Real Estate.

It is not too much to say, that these figures constitute a record of which any Company of like character might justly feel proud, and it is only proper to add that, whilst the amount of property covered has nearly tripled since 1877, our Cash assets increased from \$9,877 to \$176,495, and our Total assets from \$98,908 to the large amount of \$349,938, the working expenses connected with the Head Office are not materially higher than they were twenty years ago. Taking the items of officers' salaries, directors' fees, law costs and current expenses, in fact, every dollar of expense incurred, except for re-insurance, agents' commissions and bonuses, returned premiums and government fees, the annual expenses have been as follows :

Year.	Amount.	Year.	Amount.
1874.....	\$11,117	1885.....	\$ 7,572
1875.....	11,643	1886.....	9,788
1876.....	10,673	1887.....	10,629
1877.....	10,245	1888.....	9,089
1878.....	7,530	1889.....	9,389
1879.....	6,545	1890.....	10,597
1880.....	6,690	1891.....	10,988
1881.....	7,579	1892.....	11,223
1882.....	7,700	1893.....	11,985
1883.....	8,006	1894.....	12,846
1884.....	7,877		

Before making a brief reference to our new Head Office, let me perform a pleasing duty in referring to a few of the veteran insurers and agents who still remain connected with the Company. The policy marked No. 1 on the register for 1839 was issued to John A. Wilkes & Son, Brantford, for £1500, and among the oldest patrons or their descendants still insured in the "Gore" are the following :

George L. Beardmore, Toronto, and John Winer, Hamilton, 1839.
 Robert Forbes, Guelph, 1840.
 James Cowan, Craigie Lea, Galt, 1840.
 Andrew Malcolm, Galt, 1846.
 R. S. Strong, Galt, 1847.
 Jacob Sovereign, Delhi, Charles Magill, Hamilton, John Watson, Ayr, and Peter Jaffray, Galt, 1848.

For half a century, through good and through bad report, these gentlemen or their descendants have stood loyally by the old "Gore," and in one case, I believe, never caused the Company a dollar of loss through fire.

We have now about 120 agents, and of this number the following gentlemen, favorably known and respected in their several localities, have acted for over a quarter of a century :

Mr. Wm. Clegg, Mitchell ; Mr. John Wyllie, Ayr ; Mr. William Watson, Scaforth ; Mr. William Panton, Milton ; Mr. C. L. Beard, Woodstock ; Mr. Seneca Jones, Hamilton ; Mr. W. A. Husband, Preston ; Mr. David Abel, Port Dover ; Mr. S. Phillips, Georgetown ; Mr. William Key, Paris ; Mr. Robert Cunningham, Guelph ; Mr. P. J. Allison, Strathroy ; Mr. John S. Boswell, Peterboro' ; Mr. William Sharpe, Simcoe ; Mr. A. J. Brewster,

Hespeler; Mr. R. R. Dickey, Forest; Mr. John Ridout, Clinton; Mr. W. C. Read, Merrickville; Mr. D. Buckberrough, Waterloo; Mr. A. M. Williams, Kincardine; Mr. C. W. Fergusson, Ingersoll; Mr. J. L. Irwin, Port Hope; Mr. Chas. Morris, Barrie; Mr. W. G. Hetherington, Millbrook; Mr. John A. Leitch, Brantford.

Not a few of our most active Agents have served from ten to fifteen years, and it affords me pleasure to say that, taken as a whole, few Companies have a more efficient, honorable and painstaking staff of Officers and Agents than has the "Gore" at the present time.

Before concluding this reference it should be mentioned that six of the present Board of Directors have served continuously

FOR OVER A QUARTER OF A CENTURY,

the year in which each member was first elected having been as follows: Mr. R. S. Strong, 1863; Mr. John Watson, 1865; Mr. Adam Warnock, 1866; Mr. Charles Magill, 1867; Messrs. Hugh McCulloch and James Young, 1868; Mr. James Goldie, 1873; Mr. Hugh Cant, 1877; and Mr. Robert Scott, 1885.

Although the "Gore" existed longer without a Head Office of its own than the Children of Israel wandered in the wilderness, it must not be supposed that the project is a new one. As a matter of fact, it is over fifty-four years since it was first mooted. At the very first annual meeting, held in June, 1840, the members of the Company decided that a lot should be purchased by the Directors, and an office erected during the ensuing year. The subsequent proceedings throw an interesting side light on the vicissitudes of the "Gore's" early days, and are in brief as follows:

In 1840, Messrs. Cook, Wilkins and Walker were appointed to select a site and plan. On June 3rd, 1841, the Directors reported that they had bought Lot 12 on the north side of Colborne street, Brantford, for £6 10s., but on account of heavy losses, had deferred building. At the annual meeting in 1844, the members again instructed the Directors to build an office on the Company's lot, and at their August meeting following, the Board decided to consider at its next meeting the advisability of exchanging Lot 12 for the west half of Lot 25 on the south side of Colborne street. The motion, however, does not seem to have been acted upon; indeed, notwithstanding repeated resolutions,

THE ERECTION OF AN OFFICE

always hung fire. Finally, in 1846, the Board instructed Mr. William Mathews, auctioneer, to sell their lot, which he promptly did for £131 5s., and thus ended the first efforts to equip the "Gore" with a Head Office of its own.

For forty-six years the project was never revived. Although frequently mentioned of late years at Board and annual meetings, it was not until near the close of 1892 that the Directors came to the conclusion that the time had fully come when the erection of a

Head Office, especially adapted for Insurance business, was not only warranted, but absolutely required to accommodate our large and increasing business. The decision, once made, was acted upon with customary promptitude. The Ellis and Oddfellows' properties on the corner of Main and Ainslie streets were purchased in January following, the old wooden buildings—relics of Galt's early days—promptly removed, and prizes offered to Architects for a substantial and suitable plan. Out of

SEVEN COMPETITIVE DESIGNS,

the Board, aided by Henry Langley, Esq., Architect, Toronto, unanimously decided in favor of the one with the motto "Cromlech." This proved to be the plan submitted by our own townsman, Mr. Fred. W. Mellish, and after the specifications and details had been prepared, the contract was let to the lowest tenderers, Messrs. W. & F. A. Scott, with Mr. Wm. Edmonds as sub-contractor for the stone and brick work.

With the exception of a portion of the tower, the building has now been completed, and the "Gore" entered into its new home during Christmas week. Mr. Mellish has kindly furnished me with the following description :

"The style of the building is of a Romanesque character, and is built with a Connecticut brown stone rock-faced base up to the first storey window sills; above this it is faced with brown pressed brick, tooled Portage Entry stone trimmings and Terra Cotta carvings. The corner on Main and Ainslie streets is round, built with tooled stone-work from the base to the second storey windows, having over the main entrance a heavily moulded arch supported on two Doric columns, and over the arch the Company's name is carved in mediaeval letters. This round corner is continued up above the roof, forming a round tower roofed with Spanish tiles and terminating in a columned and octagon lantern, with ogee top and flag staff. The height from the sidewalk to the base of the flag staff is about eighty-two feet."

The building fully realizes expectations. I only voice public opinion in describing it as a substantial, convenient and handsome structure, fitted up internally with hot water heating, gas and electric light, and all necessary modern Insurance appliances. It reflects much credit upon the architect and contractors, and in conjunction with the ornate building of Mr. R. G. Struthers, adjoining, makes up a business block which is justly regarded as an ornament to the town.

I cannot conclude this review of the inception of the "Gore" and its long career, without congratulating its members on its present fortunate position. The lucid statements of its affairs at the close of 1894, just submitted to the meeting, as well as the statistics I have given, amply testify to its

GREAT PROGRESS AND PROSPERITY.

Our members have not only enjoyed cheap insurance, but the management have been enabled, after providing for every liability, to accum-

ulate a Reserve Fund of over \$100,000, and during the past four years to return to members nearly \$40,000, or $17\frac{1}{2}\%$ annually of all assessments paid by them.

I shall not dwell further, gentlemen, upon these facts. They speak for themselves. But it is probably due to the Company, it certainly is to my fellow Directors, and especially to our honored and efficient Manager, Mr. Strong, that I should not close without mentioning that the Government returns show for several years past that the "Gore" has held the strongest financial position of any Fire Insurance Company of its class in Canada, and that at no period of its long and chequered career was it anything like so prosperous and popular as it is now at the beginning of its second half century. (Loud applause.)

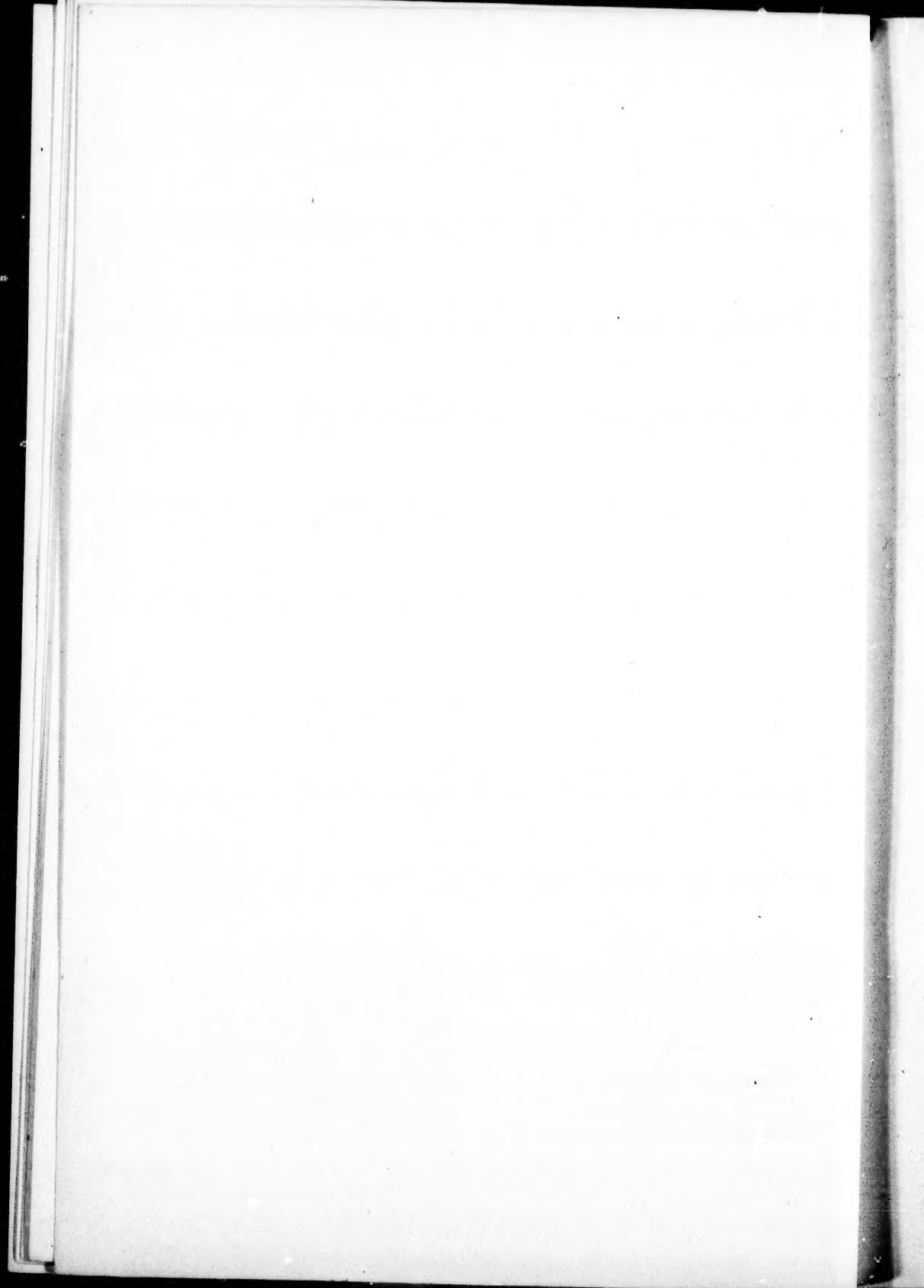


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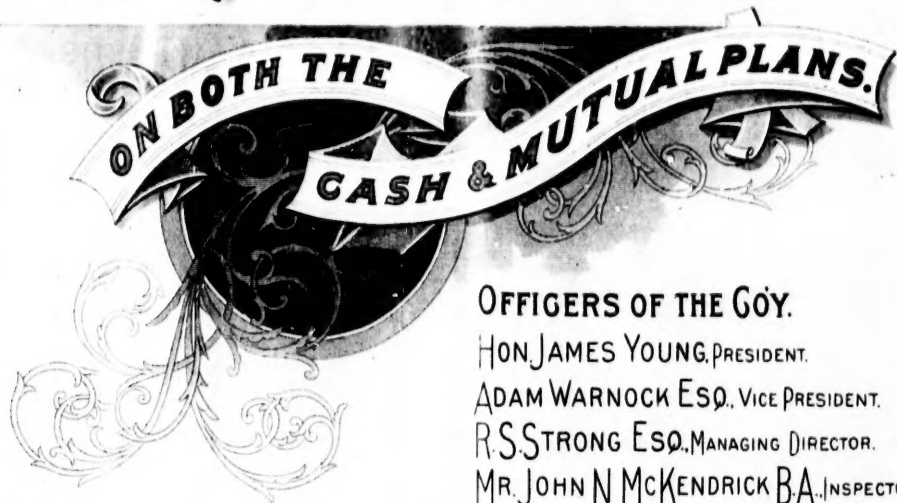
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company,
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century.

List of Agents of the "Gore."

ALTON—Robert Algie.
APPIN—G. C. Elliott.
ARTHUR—Wellington Pinder.
AYLMER—J. A. Summers.
AYR—John Wyllie.
BADEN—Erbach & Liersch.
BARRIE—Chas. Morris, 122 Crawford St.,
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